

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 12172 311438Z

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2353

S E C R E T MOSCOW 12172

NODIS

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM PCAT UR US

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO MENDELEVICH COMMENTS ON CAT AND
INDIAN OCEAN

REF: STATE 135299

1. CHARGE CALLED ON MENDELEVICH MAY 30 TO CONVEY DEPARMTNET'S RESPONSE TO HIS EARLIER COMMENTS. AFTER LISTENING TO DEPARTMENT'S RESPONSE, MENDELEVICH REMARKED THAT WE SEEMED TO BE IN COMPLETE AGREEMENT REGARDING THE TEXT OF THE JOINT COMMUNICATION AND OUR PROCEDURES IN BRIEFING ALLIES. HE ADDED THAT, IF ASKED TO BRIEF ALLIES OF U.S., HE WOULD CONFINE HIMSELF TO GENERALITIES AND NOT GO MUCH BEYOND THE PUBLIC STATEMENT.

2. SOVIET PROPOSAL: MENDELEVICH SAID THAT HE HAD UNDERSTOOD THAT U.S. REJECTED PROPOSAL, BUT THAT HE DID NOT CONSIDER THIS A CLOSED ISSUE SINCE IT IS RELATED TO THE SUBJECT OF THE DISCUSSIONS AND THAT HE HOPED TO BE ABLE, BY FURTHER ARGUMENTATION AND "ELOQUENCE," TO PERSUADE U.S. TO RECONSIDER ITS POSITION. HE DENIED EVER STATING THAT THIS PROPOSAL WAS "SEPARATE FROM THE CONSULTATIONS," BUT CLAIMED TO HAVE SAID THAT IT WAS NOT LINKED TO OR DEPENDENT UPON THE OTHER ISSUES DISCUSSED IN THE CONSULTATIONS.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 MOSCOW 12172 311438Z

HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT WE HAD NOT YET AGREED UPON A FRAMEWORK FOR NEGOTIATION OF CONVENTIONAL ARMS TRANSFER ISSUES, AND INDEED THIS IS THE GOAL OF OUR CONSULTATIONS. UNTIL THERE IS AN AGREED FRAMEWORK, THE ATTEMPT OF ONE SIDE TO EXCLUDE FROM CONSIDERATION PARTICULAR SUBJECTS SMACKS OF IMPOSING CONDITIONS ON THE TALKS. (CHARGE REJOINED THAT WE WISHED TO MAKE OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD THEIR PROPOSAL

CRYSTAL CLEAR, SINCE IT WOULD BE UNFORTUNATE TO WASTE TIME
IN THE DISCUSSIONS ON A PROPOSAL WHICH IS UNACCEPTABLE TO
ONE OF THE PARTIES.)

3. DATES FOR NEXT INDIAN OCEAN AND CAT ROUNDS:

A. INDIAN OCEAN: MENDELEVICH SAID THAT NO POINT WOULD BE SERVED BY WORRYING OVER WHO SAID WHAT TO WHOM. THE CURRENT SOVIET POSITION ON THE TIMING OF THE NEXT I.O. ROUND IS THAT THEY PROPOSED THE SECOND HALF OF MAY AND THIS WAS REJECTED BY THE U.S., THEREFORE THE SOVIETS ASSUME THAT THE U.S. WILL PROPOSE A DATE WHEN AND IF IT IS READY FOR ANOTHER ROUND. HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT THE SOVIET UNION IS INTERESTED IN INDIAN OCEAN ARMS CONTROL, BUT NO MORE INTERESTED THAN THE U.S. HE COULD UNDERSTAND THAT POSSIBLY THE U.S. INTEREST HAS COOLED: THESE THINGS HAPPEN, AND THE U.S. HAS EVERY RIGHT TO TERMINATE THE NEGOTIATIONS IF IT WISHES. IF IT DOES SO, OF COURSE, THERE ARE POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES WHICH MAY FLOW FROM THE ABSENCE OF AGREEMENT, BOTH INTERNATIONAL (SINCE MANY STATES ARE INTERESTED IN A SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME) AND BILATERAL. HOWEVER, THIS IS A MATTER FOR THE U.S. TO DECIDE FOR ITSELF AND IT WILL PRESUMABLY TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THESE POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES IN MAKING A DECISION.

B. CAT: MENDELEVICH NOTED THAT IN THE PAST THE U.S. HAD
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 MOSCOW 12172 311438Z

EMPHASIZED THE URGENCY OF CONSULTING ON THIS SUBJECT. THE SOVIET POSITION IS SIMPLY THAT THEY ARE PREPARED TO AGREE TO A DATE FOR ANOTHER ROUND IF THE U.S. PROPOSES ONE. HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT THERE IS A PRACTICAL PROBLEM IN ALL OF THIS: IT IS SIMPLY DIFFICULT TO PLAN STAFF WORK AND CALENDARS WITHOUT SOME IDEA OF THE TIMING OF THE ROUNDS. HOWEVER, THE U.S. POSITION IS UNDERSTOOD AND HE WILL AWAIT FURTHER WORD FROM US. (COMMENT: MENDELEVICH SEEMED TO BE HINTING THAT IF WE DELAY SETTING DATES, WE MAY FIND THAT OTHER COMMITMENTS AND VACATION SCHEDULES WILL INTERFERE WITH SCHEDULING.) MATLOCK

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